

REMARKS


The Claims have been amended to make it clear that the some of the vacuum chambers within the various claimed guide beams are high vacuum chambers while others are low vacuum chambers. It is believed that this arrangement clearly distinguishes the currently applied art.

Although it is acknowledged that Kwan describes an X-beam 11 having multiple longitudinally extending cells, it is not clear that those cells serve as independent first and second vacuum chambers as required by independent claims 8, 11, 28 and 30 prior to the present amendment. Certainly nothing in Kwan discloses or reasonably suggests that the various cells serve as separate vacuum chambers that operate at different (e.g. high and low) vacuum chambers as now required by independent claims 8, 11, 28 and 30. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are patentable over the art of record and that the outstanding rejections should be withdrawn.

Additionally, the various claims require additional elements that when considered in the context of the claimed invention further patentably distinguish the art of record.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are patentable over the art of record and that this case is now in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any remaining concerns regarding the present application, he is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,  
BEYER WEAVER & THOMAS, LLP

  
Steve D Beyer  
Reg. No. 31,234

P.O. Box 70250  
Oakland, CA 94612-0250

NIKOP002/PA0327